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Conjectural histories: pros and cons

Alan Barnard & Gertrud Boden

Overview

The aim of this book was to contribute to untangling the historical relations between the indigenous peoples of the Kalahari Basin Area, often subsumed under the label “Khoisan”, yet increasingly thought of as making up a *Sprachbund* composed of three individual language families, viz. Khoe-Kwadi, Kx’a and Tuu (GÜLDEMANN, forthcoming-b). Throughout the book the authors of the individual chapters have discussed the historical implications of features of kinship terminologies and kinship practices in terms of common ancestry and contact, relying on linguistic and ethnographic material to be found in the literature or collected during their own fieldwork. The book could not deal with other aspects of Khoisan culture which might reveal historical relations between Khoisan populations such as, for example, material culture, mythology or, indeed, other aspects of social and political organization. However, even though the book has focused on kinship alone, a number of hypotheses on the historical relations in the Kalahari Basin Area have been developed. At the same time, it has to be admitted that in spite of the limited focus of research, considerable gaps and desiderata remain, both in the field of Khoisan kinship as well as with respect to appropriate methodology and theory.

In his comparative ethnography of Khoisan peoples, BARNARD (1992a: 5) identified kinship as especially significant for regional comparison “because kinship appears to be the most fundamental area of difference between Khoisan societies,

while at the same time having at its core certain principles which unite Khoisan culture as a whole". His explicit aim then was to "convey some idea of the historical and structural linkages between Khoisan cultures" (ibid: 295). In the present book the focus was on interpreting both differences and similarities within and between the kinship systems of the three Khoisan language families in terms of common ancestry and contact. The approach was threefold and combined the collection of new data with regional comparison and historical analysis. Challenges, results and remaining gaps manifest in each of these research strands will be summarized before we sketch our hypotheses regarding conjectural histories and the prospects for further research.

Documentation

When the KBA project started in 2010, many Khoisan kinship systems had not been dealt with in any detail in academic publications. This book presents new comprehensive data on the kinship terminologies of two Khoe languages (Khwe and Shua) and one Tuu language (Nǀng), each of which has been awarded an individual chapter in the first section of the book. Furthermore, survey-like data on the kinship terminologies for different dialects of individual languages, whose kinship terminology had already been described in previous ethnographies, yet just for speakers of one dialect group, were added to the data inventory. The latter pertains, in particular, to kinship terminologies of Taa and Ju dialects which had up to then largely escaped academic attention.

Within the Khoe-Kwadi family, the isolate Kwadi language is extinct, and the unpublished fieldnotes by WESTPHAL do not provide a sufficient database to reconstruct Kwadi kinship terms and categories, let alone kinship norms and practices. If no unpublished sources materialize in the future, for example by early Portuguese travelers to south-western Angola, this will remain the state of affairs forever. It is particularly annoying since a comprehensive account of the Kwadi kinship system would be very valuable for reconstructing the structural essentials and ancient kinship features internal to the Khoe-Kwadi family.

Beside Kwadi, kinship data from the societies of the Eastern and Northern Khoe Bushmen had remained particularly sparse. As BARNARD (1992a: 121) noted, "[i]t was for so long assumed that they were merely 'acculturated' Bushmen that few ethnographers have described them in terms of a traditional lifestyle". This was ob-

viously related to the fact that, in the early 20th century, in particular the groups in eastern Botswana had attracted attention from the government (TAGART 1933), the church (LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY 1935) and the League of Nations (JOYCE 1938) because of their mistreatment in the service of Bantu-speaking herders. MCGREGOR's chapter on Shua kinship terms is the first comprehensive account of an eastern Kalahari Khoe kinship terminology and a major achievement in this respect, yet we are still lacking thorough descriptions of kinship norms and practices as well as a documentation of the variation of kinship terms and classifications throughout the Eastern Khoe Bushmen groups such as the Kua, Ts'ixa or Danisi. Similar conditions obtain for the Kxoe group. While BODEN's chapter (Chapter 2) delivers an in-depth discussion of the kinship terminology of the Khwe in Namibia's Bwabwata National Park, variations in other Kxoe dialects such as Buga or ǁ'Ani remain widely unexplored. Another desideratum is a pan-dialectal study of Khoekhoe kinship terminologies, as the wide geographical distribution of the language and the different language contact settings of its speakers suggest local variation. A deeper knowledge of such variation would be useful for reconstructing historical trajectories and enhancing our general understanding of transformations in kinship terminologies.

Within the Kx'a family, which is composed of the Ju dialect cluster and the ǀ'Amkoe isolate, the ethnographic focus has long been on the Ju|'hoansi in the Nyae Nyae and Dobe areas. Again, this was partly an effect of the observed 'acculturated' status of other Ju-speakers as either farm workers or in the service of Owambo patrons. Only very recently, these other groups have attracted the attention of anthropologists, such as in the work of SUZMAN (2000) and SYLVAIN (2000) on 'farm Bushmen' or by TAKADA (2005, 2007, 2008a, 2008b, 2010, 2011) on the !Xun of Ekoka in northern Namibia. That kinship terms and categories differ in other Ju groups as was already suggested by the early work of Lucy LLOYD and Dorothea BLEEK and has been confirmed within the Kalahari Basin Area project through a survey undertaken by BODEN (see Chapter 8). Again, comprehensive studies of the kinship systems of most of these groups are still lacking. They are regarded a necessity for understanding the historical trajectories not only within the Ju dialect group but also between Ju and its neighbours.

The situation with the few remaining speakers of ǀ'Amkoe is better and worse at the same time. Whereas their kinship terminology and classification has been documented quite comprehensively by linguist GRUBER (1973) and again within the

KBA project (see Chapter 8), their language is moribund. Therefore, a reconstruction of a distinctly ǀ'Amkoe kinship system will remain sealed in history, as nowadays individual speakers live in communities whose members mainly speak other languages, in particular Gǀui and Kgalagadi.

Within the Tuu language family, the only group for which ethnographic kinship data had previously been published are the !Xoon in Botswana who speak a dialect of the Taa language cluster (cf. HEINZ 1994). The comparative survey on Taa kinship terminologies by BODEN, conducted as part of the KBA project, revealed a number of differences between the individual dialect groups, both in the realm of kinship terms and categories. Her survey also revealed that the !Xoon term for cross-cousin, documented by HEINZ as equivalent to the term for same-sex sibling's child and so far a puzzle to experts of Khoisan kinship (BARNARD, forthcoming), was probably the result of a misunderstanding on the side of HEINZ (BODEN, forthcoming; see also Chapter 9). On a more general level the results of the survey on Taa kinship terminologies suggest that data collected with members of a small community, let alone with a small number of key informants, cannot simply be assumed to pertain to all speakers of the same language, when these are living in other geographical areas or language contact settings. However, a study of what the differences in kinship terms and categories imply for social relations was impossible to accomplish within the scope of the KBA project because such a study would require in-depth and long-term ethnographic fieldwork in different communities.

For other Tuu languages, apart from Taa, some early data on kinship terms have been published (e.g., BLEEK 1924, 1929, 1937, 1956; POTGIETER 1955; TRAILL 1999 [STORY 1937]) or were available from unpublished linguistic sources. Descriptions of kinship systems in action, however, are non-existent and will remain so since the languages are extinct or moribund. An attempt was made within the KBA project to reconstruct the Nǁng kinship system with the last speakers, an attempt which, however, proved futile in the sense that earlier and distinctly Nǁng kinship categories and norms could not be identified. Instead, the general conclusion has to be that former kinship systems cannot be reconstructed with speakers of moribund languages from retrospective since the differentiation of language-specific kinship classifications and practices is impossible if people do no longer live together as a speech community. Studying the actual kinship behaviour might nevertheless reveal aspects that are remnants of the cultural heritage of speech communities from the

time when their languages were still vital. Again, this would require in-depth comparative ethnographic fieldwork in communities where descendants of earlier speakers of such moribund languages make up a considerable part of the overall society. Another promising source might be the texts recorded by earlier researchers at the time when the languages were still vital, such as, for example, the |Xam texts in the digital BLEEK & LLOYD collections at the University of Cape Town (<http://lloydbleekcollection.cs.uct.ac.za/>). An analysis of kinship related data in this text corpus also remains a project worthy of future research.

While a good deal of the documentation and in particular the surveys have focused on terminologies and classifications, some ethnographic work on kinship relations could also be included in this book, thanks to the long-term familiarity of the authors with the respective communities. They cover such diverse aspects as extra-marital relationships and spouse exchange among the G||ana peoples (ONO, Chapter 5), care-giving practices among the Ekoka !Xun (TAKADA, Chapter 6) and the relevance of universal kinship categorization among the !Xoon of Namibia (BODEN, Chapter 7). While these chapters add pieces to the puzzle, enrich our understanding of the complexity of Khoisan kinship and point to possible further lines of comparative research, they provide as such but glimpses on the wide topic of Khoisan kinship and reveal the ongoing disparateness within Khoisan kinship studies, which themselves represent just a very small fraction of Khoisan ethnography more generally.

Comparison

The comparative chapters are the core piece of the book. They systematically address hypothetical trajectories of historical connections, both within individual linguistic lineages of Khoisan and between them. We believe that such controlled comparison of kinship terms and categories can reveal both their linguistic origins or “deep” common structures, and the transformations they underwent due to the changing social environments of the peoples who have used and continue to use them. It has to be stressed that the comparative approach is restricted by the available data and that we have to take into account the persistent data gaps as outlined above.

In a comparative database, we have compiled to the best of our knowledge all information on Khoisan kin terms, kin categories and selected kinship norms and practices, in particular rules of naming, joking/avoidance, marriage and residence, accessible in published and unpublished sources and would be grateful if missed

such data would be made known to us. The database also contains information on the data sets themselves, where it has been recorded, by whom, when and by which means, as well as remarks on the quality and comprehensiveness of the respective data. The sources reach from mere word lists to in-depth ethnological monographs. Every source, even if documenting the same dialect, was treated as a separate data set. This will allow users to compare the information collected at different points in time, at different locations and by different researchers for one and the same language, and thus, to help identify geographical variation and chronological development. The database so far contains 79 data sets for 17 languages: 30 data sets for seven languages of the Tuu language family (ǀXam, ǀUnkue, Nǁng, ǁXegwi, ǀHaasi, ǀ'Auni and Taa), 22 data sets for two languages of the Kx'a family (ǀ'Amkoe, Ju), and 47 datasets for eight languages of the Khoe-Kwadi family (Naro, Gǁana, Kxóé, Shua, Tshwa, !Ora-Xiri, Khoekhoe and Kwadi). The database has so far been compiled as an EXCEL file, but will be integrated into the overall database of the Kalahari Basin Area project and be available online on its website soon (<http://www2.huberlin.de/kba/>).

The historical relations of kinship categories within the Khoe language family have been intensively discussed in earlier work by BARNARD (1976, 1980b, 1992a), while the historical relations of kinship categories within the other two Khoisan families are comprehensively dealt with for the first time in this book (Chapters 8 & 9). While the authors of both Chapters conclude that the database is insufficient in different ways, it has to be stressed that for the Kx'a family, and in particular for the Ju dialect cluster, intensive research with different geographical and dialect groups is still possible and would be enable future researchers to confirm or falsify the hypotheses developed here. According to these, the kinship categories of the Juǀ'hoansi in Nyae Nyae and Dobe is closest to the proto-form, and the kinship categories of other Kx'a languages or dialects have been transformed as a result of contact, with the Ekoka !Xun terminology possibly representing a transitional stage from a lineal/collateral to a cross/parallel system. For the Tuu family, no conclusive proto-stage or scenario could be developed except for the hypothesis that some form of alternate-generation equivalence might have been present. Here, the chances are very bad to come to better results in the future because most languages are extinct.

From an overall Khoisan perspective, the hypothesis is proposed that a common proto-feature of Tuu and Kx'a kinship systems was alternate-generation equi-

valence in combination with naming rules and cyclically recurring kinship generations and names. All three features would have differentiated the proto-Tuu and proto-Kx'a kinship systems from the proto-Khoe kinship system, which is suggested to have been hierarchical, i.e. to not have terminologically equated members of ascending and descending generations, to not have had naming rules and to have had a lineal continuous flow of generations.

Chapters in the next section have compared the kinship systems of two or three neighbouring groups, whose languages belong to different language families, and have tried to explain how commonalities and differences might have developed historically. The chapters provided evidence for a great variety of individual scenarios including language shift in the case of the Naro which is in line with recent genetic findings (BARNARD, Chapter 11), incorporation into a larger regional society by cooperative kinship relations in the case of the Ekoka !Xun (TAKADA, Chapter 12), and, finally, the use of kinship categories from different languages as representing an increased and flexible repertoire, or 'bundle of resources' in TAKADA's terms, in different social contexts (BODEN, Chapter 13).

Historical Analysis

We started from the idea that studying current contact settings would be useful for identifying effective conditions and regularities of transformations in kinship terminologies, and, by analogy, for understanding historically not attested processes of change. The main challenges here are to identify the factual stages before and after an influential alteration, influential alterations themselves, as well as past contact settings that structurally correspond to present ones. As far as past versions of kinship systems are concerned we can only rely on the reconstructions in the comparative chapters. One general analogy with regard to influential factors are social hierarchies between ethnic groups. Such a hypothesis is partly confirmed by observations made in contemporary contact settings. For Taa, BODEN (forthcoming, see also Chapter 13) has argued that Kgalagadi and Afrikaans kinship categories, as expressed in the locally dominant or prestige languages, seem to be responsible for contemporary remodelling of Taa kinship classifications from a cross/parallel system in the first ascending generation to a 'split nuncle' systems in contact with Kgalagadi and to a lineal/collateral system in contact with Afrikaans. Since Taa is the sole language within the Tuu language family for which a cross/parallel pattern, otherwise

typical for Khoe languages, has been reconstructed, we can assume by analogy that an ancestor Khoe language once used to be the dominant or higher prestige language on whose kinship categories the proto-Taa ones have been modelled at an earlier period in history (see Chapter 10). Since the Khoe populations have been considered to have entered the southern African sub-continent as colonizers their kinship categories would be expected to have been imposed on local kinship systems. Different from the ancestors of the Naro (see Chapters 10 & 11), the shift would not have involved an overall language shift, but would “only” have involved the adoption of kinship categories. This, in turn, would suggest that the Taa were less affected by or better able to resist Khoe dominance in these earlier times. At the same time, currently observable remodelling of Taa kinship categories on farms does not affect all parts of the terminology in the same way and some important features, such as a relative age distinction in sibling terms and the alternate-generation equivalence among other things, are retained and even applied to dominant languages (see Chapter 13). By analogy, this would confirm the hypothesis that the alternate-generation equivalence was retained by the Kx’a-speaking ancestors of the Naro even though they shifted to a Khoe language and points to the importance of alternate-generation equivalence for their model of society.

Khoe interference to different degrees was also suggested to account for the regional variation within Ju kin categories. The open question is whether different degrees reflect different intensities or different time frames of exposure to Khoe dominance. In Chapter 8, we have made the suggestion, that the Ju|’hoan kinship terminology represents the proto-Kx’a or at least the proto-Ju kinship categories. Given the evidence for the involvement of the Ju|’hoansi in the political economy of the Kalahari (WILMSEN 1989), the question is raised what the social, economic and political conditions are that initiate, prevent, foster or stabilize changes in kinship categories. BODEN’s findings (see Chapter 13) suggest that in some cases alternative kin categories are introduced by people who, for one reason or another, have closer relationships to members of prestigious groups such as women in hypergamous marriages, foster children, workers, or, in recent times, pupils, who act as trendsetters. We know of hypergamous marriages between Khoekhoe men and San women as well as San men herding Khoekhoe sheep or joining Khoekhoe raiding parties in historic times and similar scenarios can also be imagined for prehistoric times. The problem here is to know whether and under which conditions such new trends in kinship

categorization result in sustainable change and for which communities. Models for such processes are largely missing in anthropology, and studying the effects of contact settings on kinship categories is not among the current trends in anthropology or even in anthropological kinship studies. As long as we fail to study and understand what happens to kinship categories in contemporary contact situations and why, attempts at reconstructing what happened in contact situations in the past by ethnographic analogy will lack a sound foundation in both, databases and theoretical models.

We found that most modern Kx'a languages or dialects as well as Taa seem to have adopted typically Khoe features, albeit to different degrees (see Chapter 10). Notably, this is, however, not true for the Tuu languages which have been proposed by GÜLDEMANN (2006b) to make up the Cape linguistic area together with Khoekhoe. GÜLDEMANN has argued that the Cape linguistic area came about to a large extent by substrate interference from Tuu languages in colonizing Khoekhoe. With the exception of sibling classifications (BODEN, GÜLDEMANN & JORDAN, forthcoming), the !Ui and Khoekhoe kinship classifications could not be shown to share basic features here, whereas the kinship terminologies of the Taa dialects, which are *not* proposed to be part of the Cape linguistic area, indeed reveal a Khoe-type cross/parallel pattern even though they also expose a non-Khoe like type of sibling classification. The finding that Taa as well as ǀ'Amkoe and a number of Ju dialects most probably have adopted cross/parallel kin categories from Khoe languages, while such features could not be identified in the !Ui terminologies requires an explanation. One hypothesis would be that the influence of Afrikaans on |Xam and Nǀng kinship categories (and of Bantu kin categories on ǁXegwi ones for that matter) is responsible in accordance with the dominance hypothesis. Another explanation also jumps to the mind. The fact that the Cape linguistic area does not have a correspondence in a 'Cape kin category area' might be related to the fact that in the Cape, Khoekhoe herders were in contact with !Ui hunter-gatherers, whereas in the northern parts of the Kalahari Basin Area, Khoe-speaking groups historically shared a hunting and gathering lifestyle with their Kx'a or Taa neighbours, possibly generating an alignment of kin categories between equals or, indeed, the incorporation of local kin categories into the kinship terminologies of incoming Khoe-speakers as suggested by the correlation of relative-age distinctions in sibling terms with a forager subsistence, even for different Khoekhoe dialects (cf. BODEN, GÜLDEMANN & JORDAN, forthcoming).

On a more general level, the findings discussed above suggest that, as is the case with alternate generation equivalence, sibling categories can change or persist separately from categories in the first ascending and descending generations. Whereas sibling classifications have been shown not to correspond to language family boundaries within Khoisan (BODEN, GÜLDEMANN & JORDAN, *in press*), we can now say that the absence or presence of (remnants of) alternate-generation equivalence is, indeed, indicative of language family boundaries within Khoisan. Presence or absence distinguishes Khoe kinship terminologies on the one hand from Kx'a and Tuu kinship terminologies on the other, and different sub-types of alternate-generation equivalence distinguish Kx'a and Tuu kinship terminologies (see Chapter 10). Whether alternate-generation equivalence indicates language family boundaries also in other linguistic areas would be an interesting question for further research.

Conjectural histories

There is a tendency in the anthropology of the San that major transformations came about “only” when the San came into contact with Bantu-speakers or Europeans. The historical analysis of data on Khoisan kinship terms and categories not only suggests that transformations in kinship systems came about much earlier. It also conforms to the current linguist view that they are not derived from a common ancestor system (GÜLDEMANN, *forthcoming-b*) as structural features are shared in sub-regions as much as within established language families.

The historical analysis of Khoisan kinship terms and categories does, however, not correspond to linguistic findings according to which “Khoe-Kwadi groups, which form a language family, are more diverse than Non-Khoe (a set of groups that do not form a family, or at best form a family that is far older)” (GÜLDEMANN 2008b: 121). While earlier Kx'a and Tuu kinship systems might have shared the feature of alternate-generation equivalence, modern Kx'a and Tuu kinship classifications, both within and across the two families, are much more diverse than modern Khoe kinship systems among themselves. Note that the persuasive power of common features representing the inherited “deep” structure of Khoe kinship systems, is partly the result of the higher number of languages in the Khoe family and to the fact that many of their kinship systems have been far better documented in comparison to the very small number of just two languages in the Kx'a family and the insufficient data base for most of the Tuu kinship systems. Furthermore, as BODEN has shown in Chapter

13, the vitality of a language seems to be a necessary condition for the identification, let alone the historical reconstruction of types of kinship classification.

A number of hypotheses regarding historical relations between Khoisan kinship categories have been discussed on the base of sibling classifications most recently by BODEN, GÜLDEMANN & JORDAN (forthcoming). For convenience they are repeated again here.¹

(1) Kx'a

B (Proto-Kx'a, †Amkoe) --[Kho]--> D (Ju) --> C (Ju'hoan)

(2) Tuu

a. B (Proto-Tuu, Taa) --[Khoekhoe, Bantu, Germanic]--> E (!Ui, Lower Nossob)

b. A (Proto-Tuu) --[Khoekhoe, Bantu, Germanic]--> E (!Ui, Lower Nossob)
--[Kx'a]--> B (Taa)

(3) Khoe

a. ? (Proto-Khoe) --> D (West Kalahari) --[Bantu]--> F (East Kalahari)

--[Tuu]--> E (Khoekhoe) --[Kx'a]--> D (Hai||om, †Aakhoe)

b. F₁ (Proto-Khoe) --[Kx'a]--> F₂ (East Kalahari) --[Kx'a]--> D (West Kalahari)
--[Tuu]--> E (Khoekhoe) --[Kx'a]--> D (Hai||om, †Aakhoe)

When, as has been done in this book, including kin categorizations in the first and second ascending and descending generations, a partly different picture emerges:²

¹ Arrows of the form --[Family]--> indicate that the relevant change may have been influenced by contact with the family/ies within the square brackets; A = one generic term for 'sibling', historically not attested; B = terms for 'elder sibling', 'younger sibling'; C = terms for 'elder brother', 'elder sister', 'younger sibling'; D = terms for 'elder brother', 'elder sister', 'younger brother', 'younger sisters'; E = terms for 'brother', 'sister'; F = 'elder same-sex sibling', 'younger same-sex sibling', 'opposite-sex sibling'; the difference between F₁ and F₂ lies in the absence or presence of coding for relative age.

² AG0 = no alternate generation equivalence; AG1 = alternate generation equivalence; BC = bifurcate collateral; BM1 = bifurcate merging symmetrical; BM2a = bifurcate merging asymmetrical with separate term for FZ; BM2b = bifurcate merging with FZ = MZ; LC = lineal/collateral; SN = 'split nuncle'.

(1) Kx'a

LC/AG1 (Proto-Kx'a, Proto-Ju, Ju|'hoan North)

--[*Khoe*]-- > BC/AG1 (Ekoka !Xun)

--[*Khoe, Khoekhoe*] > BM/AG0 (South Ju|'hoan)

a. --[*Khoe*]-- > BM/AG0 (proto-ǀ'Amkoe) --[*Bantu*]-- > SN/AG0 (ǀ'Amkoe)

b. --[*Khoe*]-- > SN/AG0 (ǀ'Amkoe) (ONO 2011b)

(2) Tuu

?/AG1 (Proto-Tuu) > ?/AG1 (Proto-!Ui) > ? (ǀXam, ǁXegwi)

--[*Germanic*]-- > LC/AG0 (Nǁng)

? (Proto-Taa Lower Nossob)

> ? (Lower Nossob) > ? (ǀHaasi, ǀAuni)

> --[*Khoe*]-- > BM1/AG1 (proto-Taa, West !Xoon, East !Xoon) --[*Bantu*]-- >

SN/AG1 (ǀ'N|oha, Tsaasi, ǀHoan)

(3) Khoe

a. BM1/AG0 (Proto-Khoe, Proto-Kalahari Khoe, Shua)

> BM2a/AG0 (Khoekhoe)

--[*Kx'a*]-- > Naro (BM1/AG1)

--[*Bantu: Mbukushu*]-- > Khwe (BM2b/AG0)

--[*Bantu: Kgalagadi, Tswana*]-- > Gǁana (SN/AG0)

b. BM2a/AG0 (Proto-Khoe, Khoekhoe)

> BM1/AG0 (Proto-Kalahari Khoe, Shua)

--[*Kx'a*]-- > Naro (BM1/AG1)

--[*Bantu: Mbukushu*]-- > Khwe (BM2b/AG0)

--[*Bantu: Kgalagadi, Tswana*]-- > Gǁana (SN/AG0)

The implications of the different findings with regard to the Tuu family and the Cape linguistic area have already been addressed above. Apart from this, the main points are as follows: First of all, sibling terms have been much better documented than other kinship terms resulting in a lesser number of question marks. This does, however, not necessarily mean that the hypotheses derived from sibling terms reflect a truer picture. Secondly, the kinship terminology of the Ju|'hoansi of Nyae Nyae and Dobe seems to be closer to the proto-stage and the developmental chain within

the Kx'a family would be the reverse from the one developed from Kx'a sibling categories. Thirdly, for ǀAmkoe kin categories in particular, two alternative scenarios are possible: recent interference from Kgalagadi as proposed by BODEN & TAKADA (Chapter 8) or convergence of Khoe and Kx'a features as proposed by ONO (2011b). Fourthly, the first scenario for the Khoe family corresponds to the second scenario developed from sibling categories and would confirm the idea that the Eastern Kalahari Khoe kinship categories represent the earliest stage within that family.

Prospects

While the chapters in this book present a great number of new data and insights in Khoisan kinship, this is the place to point to the remaining gaps and desiderata. They pertain to the database as well as to theory, methodology and collaboration with researchers from other disciplines which we consider necessary for better understandings of the historical relations in the Kalahari Basin Area. With respect to the database we need to analyze the available unpublished data and text material of extinct languages and conduct more research into the ways and reasons for variation and change in kinship terminologies of speakers of vital languages. The latter is an indispensable prerequisite for developing models on how kinship systems change. They should not only focus on the kin terms and categories themselves but include studies on social meanings and norms.

Many of the data discussed in this book make most sense when considering recent historical contact settings. The comparison of Khoisan kinship systems with those of their Bantu neighbours and of the ways how kinship systems work across ethnic and language borders is also essential for building models and understanding historical relations as is the comparison with results found on historical relations of kinship terminologies in other areas of the world. The latter will also help to understand whether Khoisan-wide shared features like joking/avoidance dichotomies or universal kinship categorisation signify common origin, contact or typological features. Furthermore, similar research on other aspects of culture, such as, for example, mythology or material culture would improve the findings arrived at by the analysis of kinship data alone. Finally, collaboration with researchers from other disciplines, such as genetics and archaeology on the one hand, and sociolinguistics, as well as cognitive and communication science on the other is necessary. In particular we need a fine tuned collaboration with phoneticians as well as grammarians in

order to better understand the significance of phonological and grammatical structure for historical relationships, the expression of social dimensions in kinship terms and their consequences for the flexibility and stability of kinship terminologies and categories. If nothing else, we hope to have aroused interest in further studies on the diverse aspects of changing kinship categories in contact settings and multi-lingual social network and the analogies they allow for historical reconstruction.